

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated December 9, 2005, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-7, 10-17, 20 and 21 are rejected to by the Examiner. Claims 1 and 11 have been amended. Claims 1-7, 10-17, 20 and 21 remain pending in this application.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,661,660 to Wessells et al. (hereinafter "Wessells") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,146,469 to Toshima (hereinafter "Toshima") and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,088,510 to Bannon (hereinafter "Bannon"). Claims 2, 7, 14 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wessells in view of Toshima and Bannon and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,971,654 to Schnegg et al. (hereinafter "Schnegg"). Claims 3, 4, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wessells in view of Toshima and Bannon and in further view of Schnegg and U.S. Patent No. 3,556,161 to Roberts (hereinafter "Roberts"). Claims 2, 7, 12-14 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wessells in view of Toshima and Bannon and in further view of GB 2323334 to Shin et al. (hereinafter "Shin"). Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 10-14, 17, 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shin in view of JP 11006081 to Takeuchi et al. (hereinafter "Takeuchi"), JP 55130839 to Nakayama et al. (hereinafter "Nakayama") and Bannon. Claims 3, 4, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shin in view of Takeuchi, Nakayama and Bannon.

The rejection of claims 1-7, 10-17, 20 and 21 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 1-7, 10-17, 20 and 21 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "wherein the ultrasonic oscillator is located in the interior of the etching bath and the ultrasonic oscillator completely surrounds the bottom and sides of the etching bath." None of the cited references including Wessells, Toshima, Bannon, Shin, Takeuchi, and Nakayama, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. None of these references teach the ultrasonic oscillator completely surrounding the bottom and sides of the etching bath. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-7, 10-17, 20 and 21 are

allowable over the cited references. Further, the additionally cited references Schnegg and Roberts fails to cure the above identified deficiencies.


Applicant believes the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. *A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.*

Respectfully submitted,

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